

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



State of California  
The Natural Resources Agency  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Soquel Demonstration State Forest - Large Woody Debris and Habitat Complexity Project		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Within the East Branch of Soquel Creek in Soquel Demonstration State Forest (SDSF) (Township, Range, and Section are not available)	<b>COUNTY</b>	Santa Cruz
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Peter H. Cafferata, CAL FIRE Forest Hydrologist		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection PO Box 944246, Sacramento, CA 94244	<b>PHONE</b>	(916) 653-9455

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project, located along the East Branch of Soquel Creek within the boundaries of SDSF which is managed by CAL FIRE, includes the following components: (1) installing large wood along a 0.7 mile stretch of the East Branch of Soquel Creek in four, 200-foot reaches, and (2) monitoring the large wood structures to document wood movement, aquatic habitat changes, and fish community changes. Each of the four reaches will contain three large wood elements and each element will have one to four pieces of large wood installed. There will be two unsecured sites with two to three log clusters installed per site. Additionally, there will be two secured sites, with each site consisting of a log-vane structure with a rootwad, a log cluster, and a rootwad anchor. The purpose of the project is to contribute to the survival and recovery of federally and State endangered coho salmon in this watershed, as well as the survival and recovery of federally threatened steelhead, by increasing habitat complexity and pool frequency.

### EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 6 §15306 (Information Collection)  
Class 33 §15333 (Small Habitat Restoration Projects)-
- ☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

### REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits within the descriptions of the above-listed two Categorical Exemptions authorized in the CEQA Guidelines. Class 33 consists of small habitat restoration projects less than five acres in size that maintain, restore, enhance, or protect the habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife. Class 6 consists of data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that will not result in a major disturbance to environmental resources. This project will enhance habitat for state and federally listed anadromous salmonid species and monitoring of the installed structures will provide important research data (collected by NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center under a signed MOU with CAL FIRE). The areas where new ground disturbing activities will occur are limited and relatively minor in scope. Avoidance and minimization measures, as articulated by DFG and NMFS and as specified by applicable permits from those agencies, the CCRWQCB, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will be implemented to reduce potential temporary, construction-related effects on water quality and special-status species. CAL FIRE has determined this project would not significantly impact the environment. Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at Sacramento.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING



*William E. Snyder* 5/31/11  
William E. Snyder, Deputy Director Date  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection